

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated July 12, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on October 12, 2006.

Claims 1-12 and 15-17 remain pending in the application and are shown above. Claims 1-12 and 15-17 are objected to. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is requested for reasons presented below.

Double Patenting

Claims 1 and 9 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 6-9 of copending Application No. 10/268,284. Claims 2, 3, 8 and 10 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 6-9 of copending Application No. 10/268,284 in view of *Woodruff et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,497,801). Claims 4, 11-12 and 15 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 6-9 of copending Application No. 10/268,284 in view of *Woodruff et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,497,801) and further in view of *Mayer et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,773,571). Claims 5-7 and 16-17 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 6-9 of copending Application No. 10/268,284 in view of *Mayer et al* (U.S. Patent No. 6,773,571).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-4 and 6-9 of copending Application No. 10/268,284 have been cancelled in the preliminary amendment filed January 14, 2004. The current pending claims of the copending application do not recite subject matter claimed in claims 1-12 and 15-17 of the present application. Therefore, claims 1-12 and 15-17 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, the references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed.

The secondary references made of record are noted. However, it is believed that the secondary references are no more pertinent to the Applicant's disclosure than the primary references cited in the office action. Therefore, Applicant believes that a detailed discussion of the secondary references is not necessary for a full and complete response to this office action.

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



Keith M. Tackett
Registration No. 32,008
PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicant(s)